

SCIENTIFIC NAME

Leucoraja naevus (Müller & Henle, 1841)

DISTRIBUTION

Northeast Atlantic from Norway to Morocco including the Mediterranean Sea.¹⁻⁴

COMMON NAMES

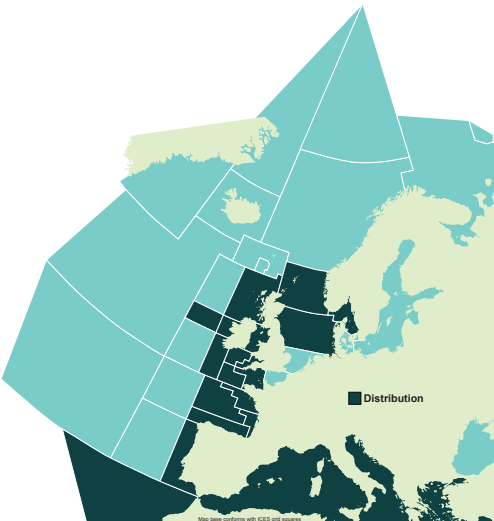
CUCKOO RAY, Cuckoo Skate, Butterfly Skate, Kuckucksrochen (DEU), Raya Santiguosa (ESP), Raie Fleurie (FRA), Razza Cuculo (ITA), Grootoogrog (NLD), Raia-de-dois-olhos (PRT).

IDENTIFICATION AND COLOUR

- 1 3–5 rows of thorns along tail joining to 2 median rows on trunk.^{1,4}
 - 2 9–13 thorns on each orbital rim.¹
 - 3 Large black and yellow eyespot on each pectoral fin.^{1,4}
- ▶ Dorsal surface spinulose.^{1,4}
 - ▶ Light grey to brown dorsal surface.^{1,4}
 - ▶ Ventral surface white with grey margin.¹

SIZE AND BIOLOGY

- ▶ Birth: 9–12cm.
- ▶ Matures: female 53–60cm; male 50–57cm.
- ▶ Max. TL: female 75cm; male 67cm.^{1,4}
- ▶ Max. age est.: 12 years.¹
- ▶ Oviparous, females produce ~100 eggcases throughout the year.^{1,4}
- ▶ Embryonic development takes ~8 months.^{1,4}
- ▶ Feeds on crustaceans, polychaete worms and teleosts.^{1,4,5}

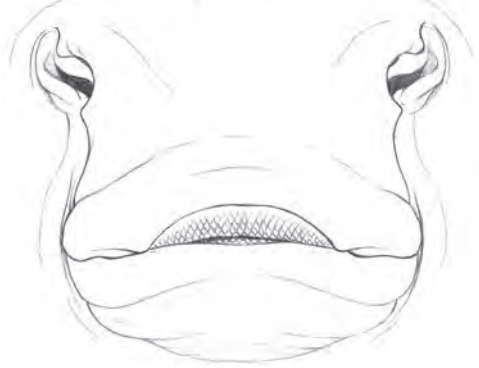


EGGCASE

- ▶ 28–37mm wide.⁶
- ▶ 32–65mm long (excl. horns).⁶
- ▶ Delicate and rounded capsule with a smooth texture.^{1,6}
- ▶ If unbroken, upper horns are very long, about twice the length of the lower horns.^{1,6}
- ▶ Similar eggcase to the Spotted Ray *Raja montagui*, Shagreen Ray *Leucoraja fullonica* and Sandy Ray *L. circularis*.



TEETH

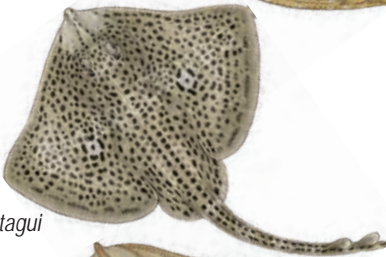


- ▶ Sharp cusped teeth.¹
- ▶ Upper jaw: 54–60.¹

SIMILAR SPECIES



Small-eyed Ray
Raja microocellata



Spotted Ray
Raja montagui



Sandy Ray
Leucoraja circularis

HABITAT

- ▶ Demersal from 30–500m. Most commonly to 200m.^{1,4}
- ▶ Found on the continental shelf and upper slopes over sandy and coarse substrates.^{1,4}

CONSERVATION STATUS*

- ▶ IUCN Red List: Global: Least Concern (2015)
Europe: Least Concern (2015)
Mediterranean: Near Threatened (2016)
- ▶ A relatively widespread skate, the Northeast Atlantic population has remained stable. As a smaller bodied skate, the Cuckoo Ray may be better able to withstand fishing pressure than larger bodied skates. Further research on stock levels is needed due to issues with misidentification.^{3,7}

COMMERCIAL IMPORTANCE

- ▶ No targeted fisheries exist for the Cuckoo Ray in the Northeast Atlantic but it's taken as bycatch in demersal, gillnet and offshore trawl and dredge fisheries targeting hake, anglerfish, scallops and flat fish.^{3,7-9}
- ▶ As a smaller species of skate, it is less valued and frequently discarded however sometimes landed and utilised for human consumption.^{3,7-8}

MANAGEMENT*

- ▶ Subject to regulations under the CFP.

REFERENCES

- 1 Ebert & Stehmann. 2013.
- 2 Ellis *et al.* 2005.
- 3 Ellis *et al.* 2015.
- 4 Last *et al.* 2016.
- 5 Farias *et al.* 2005.
- 6 Gordon *et al.* 2016.
- 7 Griffiths *et al.* 2013.
- 8 ICES Advice. 2016.
- 9 Craven *et al.* 2013.